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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR JUNE 13, 2006

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for June 13, 2006.

Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

HURRIYET ONLINE / OZGUR GUNDEM: The third hearing of the Semdinli case is being held at Van's Third Heavy Penalty Court. Mesut Deger, Diyarbakir deputy from CHP and Deputy Chairperson of Turkish Parliamentary Human Rights Commission (TPHRC), who attended the court session, said that they expected a verdict to come out of the third hearing. Mehmet Elkatmis, Chairperson of TPHRC, and Esat Canan, Hakkari deputy from CHP, have also been monitoring the case.

ZAMAN / EVRENSEL / EKSPRES / SABAH (GUNEY): Funeral of one of the soldiers killed in Tunceli (06/12) by terrorists was held in Mersin. Separately, a military vehicle had a rollover accident on the road between Hakkari and Van. A non-commissioned officer and a private were wounded.

EKSPRES / HURRIYET (CUKUROVA) / SABAH (GUNEY): Eighty Afghans, Bangladeshis and Pakistanis, who entered the country illegally, have been caught traveling from Van to Izmir on the road between Adana and Konya.

EKSPRES / EVRENSEL / OZGUR GUNDEM: A 3.2-magnitude earthquake shook Van's Gulpinar district. Meanwhile, minor earthquakes with magnitudes 3.1 and 3.0 shook Osmaniye's Kadirli district and Adana's Ceyhan district respectively.

EVRENSEL / OZGUR GUNDEM: Anti-terror branch of Tunceli's Security Directorate detained a journalist from DIHA (Dicle News Agency) because of another person's statement concerning him. Security members have conducted a raid at the house of the journalist. Meanwhile, an employee of the Ozgur Gundem daily has also been detained by Jandarma officials in Maden district as she was traveling to Elazig (on unspecified grounds).

EVRENSEL: Members of the intelligentsia, who attended the conference in Diyarbakir, reportedly expressed very positive opinions about the outcome of the event (see press summary 06/12).

OZGUR GUNDEM: Diyarbakir Mayor Osman Baydemir gave his statement concerning the investigation that was started when 56 mayors of the region sent a letter in December 2005 to Denmark's prime minister in support for the Roj TV.

OZGUR GUNDEM: The daily mentioned in front page coverage that despite Turkey's opening of talks on reforms with the EU, human rights violations in the southeastern region have

increased recently. The daily gives three examples of such violations: 1- Forest land in the area between Mardin's Midyat district and Sirnak's Idil district has allegedly been set on fire by Turkish Military on security grounds (Note: This is an alleged common practice of the military that stated back in 1990s under state of emergency rule in the region. End Note.), 2- Because of a recent terrorist attack on a military convoy in Tunceli (see press summary 06/12) Tunceli Security Directorate has banned all the wedding ceremonies in the province to be held around these days, 3- The presence of soldiers in a village of Kars's Digor district has allegedly turned the area into a military camp. Soldiers have reportedly been treating the local people as if they were enemies.

BOLGE / HURRIYET (CUKUROVA) / SABAH (GUNEY) / HURRIYET: Mersin police conducted a search on a car on the road between Adana and Mersin, and found 93 kilograms of narcotic material used in deriving heroin in hidden sections of a truck that set off from Van in order to traffic drugs abroad. Sabah (GuneY) daily separately reported that Van Jandarma Command teams seized 125 kilograms of hashish in two search operations in the storage section of a house in Van and in a car. The two people caught in connection with the illegal narcotics reportedly had posters of terrorist leader Abdullah Ocalan in their houses. Separately, Hakkari police found 145 kilograms of pure heroin in hidden sections of a truck, which set off for Van, at an exit near Hakkari. Separately, Sanliurfa police seized 15 kilograms of heroin in Sanliurfa in a truck which set off from Van for Istanbul. Three people have been detained.

HURRIYET (CUKUROVA) : Concerning the recent bar on foreigners' purchasing of real estate property in Hatay because of numbers exceeding the 5 per thousand quota allowed for such property trading, Iskenderun's Mayor in Hatay warned that the numbers in such trading have already gone very far beyond what is actually allowed.

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OZGUR GUNDEM: Quarantine has been imposed in three villages of Osmaniye because of rabies detected in animals. Health officials took necessary measures against the disease.

HURRIYET / RADIKAL / OZGUR GUNDEM: Diyarbakir Security Directorate reportedly found five of the 34 children who were found out to have disappeared from the state orphanage in Diyarbakir. The children were reportedly living and working in the streets.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Anti-terror teams in Adana, which conducted unannounced raids at two houses in Seyhan district, have detained two persons on unspecified grounds.

EVRENSEL: A building contractor, who has undertaken a building project for the Jandarma in Bingol's Karlioiva district, attempted to commit suicide by drinking pesticide allegedly because of his debts to the military.  
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